



MCCC NEWS

August 1988

Issue 8

WHAT'S NEW IN THE WORLD OF SOFTWARE FOR THE C-64/128

Cheryl Howard, MCCC

New games on the shelves at Babbage's this month include: Cauldron, Road Runner, Alf, Clubhouse Sports, Fraction Fever

Road Runner was tested by Tracy, my 10 year old daughter. This game, remarkably true to the cartoon, has Wile E. Coyote chasing the Road Runner through the desert. You, as the Road Runner, must dodge oncoming trucks, stay out from under falling boulders and cannon balls. If that's not enough there are land mines to contend with as you run from Wile E. Coyote. You collect bird seed along the way to increase your energy level. You must pace yourself through this joystick controlled series of mazes and not use up all your energy-which is measured in bowls of seed at the top of the screen. There are hidden short-cuts to advance you to each level of play. This cute game is sure to keep your youngsters occupied. It is interesting and challenging for the 8 to 10 year old age group game player and is easy to figure out.

Cauldron is for the older player-tested by Tiffany, age 14, this disk is actually two games on one disk. Cauldron I is in the front and Cauldron II is on the back of the disk. The object of this game is to find the ingredients to the witch's brew. As the witch (or hag) you fly through the forest seeking keys to open doors to caves which contain the ingredients to the magic brews. Now all this sounds easy, but watch out for the bad guys trying to stop you from getting the necessary ingredients. After successfully getting the ingredient you must fly back to the witch's house, leave the ingredient, then leave again in search of another ingredient to add to the brew. All this takes time of course, but don't despair. Tiffany didn't get to complete the game and get to side two to see what Cauldron II was about, but from what observations I made, the game is standard fare for C-64 games. The concept and style of play is the same as countless games preceding Cauldron. I don't see this game as one for those seeking a serious quest to accomplish. However, it will provide hours of fun for those who like to play computer games for the sake of playing computer games. There is not an element of serious deductive strategy involved here, just good old-fashioned seek and you shall find game playing. Cont. p. 4



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JULY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MINUTES

John Malmstrom, Secretary

At the July Board meeting (actually held on June 25), the major item of business was the unanimous approval of a set of guidelines (budget) for spending by the club and its chapters. Until now there really hasn't been much of a need for a "budget" because there was always enough money to support club activities as long as spending was "prudent." But now, with a somewhat smaller membership spread over more chapters, it's necessary to be a little more careful to avoid a deficit at the end of the year. The guidelines approved by the Board are as follows: Disposition of Income

- * MCCC Dues --should be earmarked for general club and chapter operations.
- * BBS Dues --should be earmarked for BBS operation, supplies and equipment.
- * Disk Sales -- proceeds should be returned to the club treasury for disposition by the Board of Directors.
- * General Budget Items (expressed in cost per member and based on 325 members)

Per Month Per Year

Franchise Tax (\$150/year)		\$0.46
BOD Meetings (\$15/month)	\$0.05	0.55
Newsletter	0.85	10.15
Special Events (\$500/year)		1.54
Equipment	0.05	0.55
Membership/misc. (postage, etc.)	0.14	1.66
Chapter Expenses (by chapter)	0.37	4.50

(Library, rent, & other expenses)

(Each chapter is expected to stay within budget based on that chapter's membership count.)

Total budget per MCCC member \$19.42

- * BBS Budget Items (based on 170 BBS members)

Electricity and Phone	\$0.51	\$6.07
Equipment and Supplies	0.49	5.93

Total budget per BBS member \$12.00

The Board feels that by adhering to these guidelines we can provide good service to the membership without needing to change the current dues structure. Obviously, as membership increases, more services can be provided.

The Board feels that by adhering to these guidelines we can provide good service to the membership without needing to change the current dues structure. Obviously, as membership increases, more services can be provided.

In other action the Board turned down a proposal to provide library and other support for MS-DOS machines such as Amstrad, Commodore PC, and other PC clones.

A couple of closing notes:

1. If you've been wondering what that number above your name on the address label represents, it is a date code that indicates when your MCCC membership expires. For example, 880831 means that your membership will expire on August 31, 1988. If we don't receive your membership renewal in time to process it before that date, you will not receive a September newsletter, will not be eligible for library services, and will be dropped from the BBS systems on September 1. Be sure to get your renewal in early.

Cont. p. 4

BOARD MINUTES Cont.

2. If you are planning a move, please send us your change of address (in advance, if possible). Even though your newsletter may be forwarded, the Post Office charges us 30 cents each time they do that.



From the Editor's Desk:



Vanessa Bennett

NOTICE NEW PROCEDURE FOR CALLING METRO NUMBERS OUTSIDE YOUR AREA CODE (214 from 817 or 817 from 214)

Effective August 1st, all METRO number will require dialing the area code along with the seven digit number IF you are in the other area. **EXAMPLE:** If you have a 214 area code and are calling the ASCII Board you must dial 817-268-4191 or if you have an 817 area code and try to call me at home you must dial 214-988-1174. **THERE IS NO CHARGE** for these METRO numbers, the phone company says they are running out of numbers for this area, so this will allow a greater selection of phone numbers for each area code. **IF YOU HAVE A METRO NUMBER, PLEASE LET ME KNOW.** Next month I will mark the 817 and 214 METRO numbers on the **OFFICERS List** on page two.

NEW C-64/128 SOFTWARE CONT.

For all you Alf fans, Box Office has finally released the c-64 version of their Alf game that has been out for sometime for the Apple and IBM computers. I was disappointed as games for these computers are usually better constructed and more complex in strategy. Since the back of the package shows the screens for the IBM version, I have to assume that all versions are the same. This game was boring to Tracy and she is a devoted Alf fan. The object of the game is to guide Alf through a series of mazes of city streets in the Tanner neighborhood, collecting various parts of a spaceship.

You see, some of Alf's best friends from Melmac have crashlanded their spaceship on Earth and since Melmacians look like dogs, someone has alerted the Dog Catcher and he is out to capture all Alf's buddies. You must guide Alf as he searches for and collects objects to rebuild the spaceship and return his friends safely to Melmac. Sounds good so far, that's why I picked up the game. But alas, boredom sets in quickly. You leave the Tanner garage, go find a piece of pizza to eat which will give you the strength to chase down a cat, capture it and take it back to the Tanner garage. After you go through this tedious bit of business you can begin to collect pieces of the spaceship. You must then go through the same sequence (find and eat pizza, collect object, take back to garage, leave in garage, etc.) before you can go on to the next level. While you are doing all this backtracking, you have to watch out for Tanner and the Dog catcher. If Tanner catches you, you lose everything you have collected and must begin again. If the Dog catcher catches you, that's it folks, one life down the drain. Lose all three lives, and the game is over--Alf is history. It's a race against Tanner, the Dog catcher, and time as you are racing against a time limit. Just the repetitious backtracking was enough to turn us off to this game the first time we booted it up.

On the other hand, Clubhouse Sports by Mindscape is a lot of fun. These six stand-alone games are great for those of us who like a leisure game of Skee-ball or Foosball at the local arcade. Games include Skee-ball, 3-D Pinball, Billiards, Shooting Gallery, Crazy Pool, and Foosball. Each game is realistic and graphic representation is top quality. When you first boot up you are asked for a User Verification code, which amounts to finding the exact

word described in the paragraph on the screen. Example: Find the 6th word in the 10th line of the 2nd column of page 15 of your Owner's Manual.) This word must be typed EXACTLY as shown before you can access the games. Up to four players may play at one time. Games are joystick controlled and you have a screen full of options with each game. The nicest feature with all the games is that the programmers have convinced the computer that it is playing against mere humans (in the one player mode) and that it can't take unfair advantage with it's superior skills. Each game is realistic and fun to play. The enclosed reference card gives a brief description of each game and the Owner's manual goes into more detail. You can sit down and start playing without a lot of pregame reading, but be ready for a few surprises. Things don't always happen the way you think they should. Lots of good clean fun here, folks--a definite bonus in the Mindscape line.

Finally, Tracy picked up a program called Fraction Fever to do a little math review before school starts again. Unfortunately, Spinnaker left something to be desired in the way of screen display and some of the screens are hard to decipher. Basically what happens is you are on a pogo stick hopping down the sidewalk. Above you a fractional equation is displayed and as you hop across the moving sidewalk a series circles or blocks is displayed beneath the sidewalk with some of the circles or blocks shaded in. When you see the display of shaded blocks or circles that matches the fraction, press the joystick button. If you are correct you advance to the next level; if you are wrong you drop to a lower level. All the time you are racing against a timer. Pushing the joystick right or left determines the

direction of travel along the sidewalk as well as the speed in which you travel. Be careful or you will fall off the end of the sidewalk. The concept is good, but this educational game is too fast paced for the younger kids. A seven year old is going to have to be pretty fast on the trigger to avoid falling off the edge.

As far as prices and rating go, I rank Clubhouse Sports at \$25.45 the best this month. Cauldron at \$12.70 is next with Road Runner, priced at \$29.70, third. Low on the enjoyment level are Alf at \$12.70 and bottom of the ladder is Fraction Fever at \$5.90. Last month, I mentioned the variety of game show programs available for under \$15.

Tiffany has Jeopardy, Card Sharks, Wheel of Fortune and Classic Concentration. All are played very similar the game shows using keyboard controls. Tiffany likes Jeopardy and Classic Concentration best; I think she has the answers memorized by now. Tracy favors Card Sharks and Wheel of Fortune (Vanna is even included on the disk.) All the games are entertaining and are better values than some of the higher priced games.

Until next month, happy gaming....



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TIME BANDIT-AMIGA**Johnny Kitchens, MCCC**

A game of challenge awaits you in the form of "Time Bandits". This game is a surprise as the instructions give no indication of what awaits you inside this game. At first glance the game appears to be a simple run and grab type of game. Jewels, money, and keys scattered about various mazes with various bad guys chasing you. You have a gun with limitless amount of ammo which is good since you also never run out of bad guys no matter where you are. The game also gives you a lot of lives to start out with, but they go fast. You get a new man every 1000 points which are measured in cubits.

You begin to get an idea that there is more than meets the eye after you meet a few people, stumble upon unusual things, or read cryptic messages. This game is loaded! Some Time Gates have multiple levels leading to more and more complex problems to solve. There are starships you can pilot, King's crowns to recover, and even a version of Pac-Man. There are 16 Time Gates, each with 16 levels of play. Even those numbers don't tell all the levels. On the first level of one Time Gate you can play up to 5 different screens. Each screen is in reference to a different location. It's incredible!!

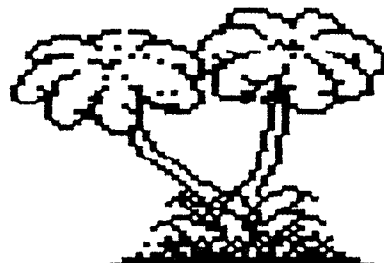
"Time Bandits" can be played as a one player or two player game. The two player version will be even harder as the screen splits, making the visible area much smaller and allowing the bad guys to get closer before they are visible. The other player also can become a foe if he enters the same Time Gate on the same level as you are on. He can shoot you or you can shoot him. This will cause the player to become a ghost who can kill with a touch!

This game is very fast paced and forces you to keep moving. Take too long to decide on a Time Gate and some flying saucer will carry you off to some place of it's own choice. Once inside if you stand still too long your potential points decrease rapidly while the bad guys are increasing rapidly. No time to be indecisive here.

This game came out originally for the Atari ST under the label MichTron. Releasing the game for the Amiga prompted MichTron to rename it's game division to MicroDeal, but there are other changes. I showed an Atari owner, who has the game, Time Bandit on the Amiga. He couldn't believe the difference. I havn't seen the differences myself, but they must be different. The disk is copy-protected. MicroDeal offers a \$5.00 replacement for damaged disk for some reassurance. Marauder II does not copy it at this time. (It may never be able to if the rumors are correct.)

If a quick shoot-em up, Pac-Man like maze, and a game of wits is to your liking then this just may be your game. IT IS NOT EASY!!!!!!

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Arkanoid

John Shortle

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Arkanoid is an arcade remake of the popular coin-op version. If you haven't played this game in the arcade, Arkanoid is the latest in the recent resurgence of pong games. In addition to the usual "Hit the ball with the paddle until all the bricks are gone," Arkanoid boasts many new twists to the old classic. When certain bricks are hit (you don't know which ones), they drop a letter (called a power capsule) to the bottom of the screen. If you catch the power capsule with your paddle (called a vau), you receive some sort of bonus to your playing abilities. The bonuses include <S>lowing the ball down, <E>xpanding your vau, <C>atching the ball, <D>isrupting the ball into three separate ones, <L>aser, reakout to the next level, and a free <P>addle. In addition to the normal colored bricks, there are also brown bricks which can't ever be destroyed, and grey bricks which require several shots (depending on what level you're on) to destroy. Each level presents a new pattern of bricks to hit down, some in very fiendishly difficult patterns.

The Amiga version of Arkanoid is very true to the arcade version. The graphics and sound effects are identical. I have only seen one Arkanoid arcade machine for any length of time, but from what I saw, the Amiga version has clearer graphics and a crisper sound. The Amiga version does not, however, have the same screens as the arcade version. In fact, they're completely different. This is no problem unless you're looking to play the EXACT arcade version on the Amiga.

Arkanoid is a very playable game. It is fun to play, has enough variety to keep you coming back, and above all, it

"feels nice." The levels are generally challenging enough so that you have fun playing them, but not so much that you are overly frustrated. (One level, however, does bother me particularly. It is quite hard and requires a substantial amount of luck to clear it. I just play it on speed 1 - the slowest.) Arkanoid, by nature, was made for a paddle. The mouse is the second best substitute, so if you're using a less than perfect mouse, you may find your vau not moving when you want it to. A little cleaning work will alleviate the problem easily.

Overall, Arkanoid is a great game. I've spent numerous enjoyable hours playing it. The problems I have pointed out are really very minor ones. If you're looking for a good arcade game, Arkanoid is the best I've seen so far.

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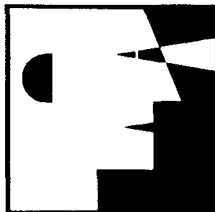
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Test Drive

John Shortle

Reprinted from MI AMIGA

Test Drive is a "Pole Position" type game that allows you "to experience the power and performance of the world's most exclusive cars." These are, according to Accolade, the Ferrari Testarossa, the Lotus Turbo Espirit, the Porsche 911 Turbo, the Lamborghini Countach, and the Corvette. When the game boots, you are given the opportunity to select which of these cars you will race in. (A nice picture of each car is displayed, and when your selection is finally made, the driver rolls down the window, looks at you, and burns off the screen.) Now you are in the driver's seat, with a view of the steering wheel, the dash board, the rear view mirrors, and the road ahead. The steering wheel and dash board are different for each of the five cars. You shift into first and accelerate onto the road. (If you rev your engine before shifting, you peel out.) When shifting gears, a picture of the stick shift (different for each car) is pictured in the lower right hand corner. I must say that this program has given me the best feeling of driving of any game I've ever seen. Now you must avoid the traffic (cars you are passing and oncoming vehicles), the cliff to the right of the road, and the drop off to the left. Periodically, a policeman will try to pull you over, and if you're not going fast enough, he will give you a ticket and you will lose precious time. If you make it to the gas station without crashing more than five times, you get extended play. You are then given a score proportional to your speed. However, as with many Amiga games, the designers concentrate so much on amazing graphics and sound, that they forget to make a

fun game. While the game is reasonably fun, there is no depth to keep you coming back. The screen is always the same (a cliff drive). They actually have a different drive on the back of the package, but I have never seen it, and I don't know anyone who has. While the extended play gets progressively harder, the game ends after the fourth extended play (fifth level), and since you only have to crash four times or less to get extended play, I almost always finish the game. Overall, the graphics and feel of the game are awesome. However, if you're looking for a fun, challenging game, this game is not for you. The package is just what it says it is - a test drive.



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AMIGA CENTRAL CHAPTER

Tim Flynn

This is an awkward month with the deadline for this article coming before our monthly meeting. Thus, I must make like Cassandra and prophesize what will occur.

First, I see a well attended meeting with so many people that we must send out for extra chairs. Tables are folded up and put away to make room. People we've never seen before are there; executives from Commodore, programmers from ASDG, engineers from Byte by Byte. News and rumors are flying like crazy. The MCCC is going to get the Club-Of-The-Year Award. The Commodore 64 is going to be upgraded to an AMIGA 256. Members are smiling. The microphone works!

Second, the main part of the meeting gets under way with the presentation of Desktop Publishing. Yes, even this long-awaited event actually takes place. The audience is enraptured and no one stands up so all can see. The lecturers are on a roll and everyone can sense that this is a meeting that will be remembered. What a show!

Third, The crowd rises and sings praises to Commodore and the AMIGA. Doves burst from the monitors and fly around the room. Everyone is ecstatic and promises their neighbor that they will be back next month.

Now as I cross my fingers and hold my breathe, I hope that your work on the AMIGA is as hot as this summer is. See you in August.

(Editor's Note: This is an excellent example of making the BEST out of an awkward situation. Thank you very much Tim.)

**CHAPTER NEWS****AMIGA BY THE LOOP CHAPTER**

Brent Wood

At our July meeting, Jack Smith presented an interesting program on desk top video programs, thanks Jack!

Our August meeting will be featuring Channel 36 Television's use of the AMIGA for producing slides such as those used for titles. See you in August!!!

Fort Worth Chapter

Mary Louise Hagemeyer

WE'RE MOVING !!

It's goodbye to G.D.R.A. and hello to the Southwest Regional Library! The Fort Worth Chapter will hold its August meeting in the auditorium of the library on Hulen St. To get there, turn north on Hulen from Loop 820. Go to the second traffic light and turn left on Briarhaven, then right into the parking lot.

Our thanks go to Cheryl Howard for the interesting talk she gave on GEOS at our July meeting. In August, Bob Krause will demonstrate Paperclip Publisher, a new desktop publishing package that is getting enthusiastic reviews. The meeting will be Saturday, August 13, at 1:30 p.m. in the SOUTHWEST REGIONAL LIBRARY ON HULEN STREET!

FORT WORTH NIGHT

Clay Sutton

The July meeting was very interesting. President, Bill Jones, presented a talk on sequential files, how to create them, read them and the best structures to save disk space. Also Phil Reynolds came by and demonstrated THE FINAL CARTRIDGE. This looks like a real powerful and useful piece of equipment. He is selling them for \$59.95. Our next meeting will be August 15 at the church.

HURST-EULESS-BEDFORD

Robyn Wilson

At the July 16th meeting Bob Krause, president of the Ft. Worth Day Chapter, briefly talked about BASIC BITS, a series of short BASIC programming tips he and Mary Louise Hagemeyer put together and present at each of their chapter meetings. If you would like more information feel free to attend their meeting the 2nd Saturday, August 12, at their NEW meeting place--Southwest Regional Library. Contact Bob at 292-6639 for further directions.

Harold Williams presented an informative on-line demonstration of Superbase 64. Superbase is a database that is available for the 64, 128 and the Amiga computers. Its capabilities are that of a wordprocessor, spreadsheet, and database manager. These three can be used in setting up programs. This database can be used in both the home or office and can be real interesting to learn about. One comment Harold made about the program is not be intimidated with the manual. You will be able to understand it after reading a few chapters.

Dan Fryling brought his collection of C64 games, utilities, productivity programs and computer magazines to the meeting. Since he has switch to using an Amiga computer, he is selling these disks at reasonable prices. You can reach him at 214-821-9300.

Fred Noble has several C64 and C128 peripherals for sale. They include two C128 computers and a C64 computer, two 1571 disk drives for the C128 and one 1541 for the 64, and three color monitors. Contact Fred at the next meeting or on the BBS.

At our next meeting, Bob Krause will talk about the Paperclip Publisher. It is a desktop publishing program that can

produce graphics and text on a page. The Publisher is like Print Shop but the Print Shop is limited in its functions. The Publisher can utilize Print Shop graphics, Newsroom graphics, and outrageous Pages graphics and also uses text files from five commonly used word processors. Be at the next meeting on August 20th to find out more about this program.

A reminder the METCOM '88 is going to be held on the last Saturday in October (the 29th), from 9am to 5 pm in the Arlington Convention Center.

ARLINGTON/GRAND PRAIRIE

Janet Hamm

Twenty four people were present at the July 19th meeting. This includes four new members: Mary Marco, Jack Lozier and Aaron, and Basil Kaskabas and three guests.

Our president, Glen Herring, reported that six members attended the Second Saturday of the Month Workshop. He also verified our workshop will continue meeting at the Grand Prairie Public Library at 1:30 pm.

Brad Dumlal demonstrated a home financial planning program which he wrote and hopes to have it on the market in the near future. This program features utilities for writing and processing checks; keeping an expense journal, a budget; creating bar graphs, showing totals and averages; and other useful utilities. Brad ended his presentation by showing another program called SWINTH, a kaleidoscope accompanied by music. SWINTH is available in our MCCC Public Domain Library. Watch for Brad at our October 29th Computer Fair at Arlington Convention Center.

To find out what's new and on sale at Federated in Hurst, call Federated's Bulletin Board at (817) 284-7485 cont. p.14



CHAPTER NEWS

ARLINGTON/GRAND PRAIRIE Cont.

This information was given to us by Basil Kaskabas, one of our new members - THANKS!

There are many word processing programs on the market now. At our next meeting, August 16th, several of our members will be sharing information on different word processors such as: SPEED SCRIPT, PAPER CLIP, EASY SCRIPT, BANK STREET WRITER, WORD WRITER, AND VISA WRITE. This should be an interesting and informative program. Come join us for an evening of word processing August 16th at 6:30 pm at Arlington Community Center.

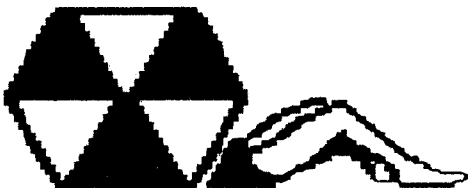
WHAT'S MORE???

Besides the articles found in this month's MCCC NEWS, you will find the following articles on the MCCC Bulletin Boards and STARTEXT!!!

ZOOM - an action game review by Johnny Kitchens, MCCC

PHASE - a home accounting program review by Henry Colonna, Ami Report

FLIGHT SIMULATORS FOR THE AMIGA - review and comparison by Henry Colonna, Ami Report



The dealers listed on the right column offer special prices to MCCC members on a regular basis. Be sure to show your membership card when making a purchase.

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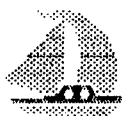
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7	8	9 AMIGA LOOP N.R.H. CHURCH OF CHRIST N. Richland Hills 7:30pm 2nd Tues Rick Schulz 281-3996	10	11	12	13 FT. WORTH DAY ARL/GP WORKSHOP 1:30pm Read details in Chapter News Call President
14	15 FT. WORTH NIGHT St. Elisabeth Epis. Church 7:00pm 3rd Mon Bill Jones 295-8637	16 ARL/G. P. Community Ctr. Arlington, TX 6:30pm 3rd Tues Glen Herring 572-0489	17	18 AMIGA CENTRAL Community Ctr. Arlington, TX 7:30 pm 3rd Thur Bill Raecke 465-2014	19	20 H. E. B. Hurst Civic Ctr. 1:30 3rd Sat. Glenn Schneider 540-1021 MCCC NEWS DEADLINE
21	22	23	24	25	26	27 SEPTEMBER DIRECTORS MTG N. R. H. Rec. Ctr 10:00am Harold Williams 483-0537 N. Richland Hills
28	29	30	31			

REMEMBER: SEPTEMBER'S DIRECTORS MEETING IS AUGUST 27TH

MID-CITIES COMMODORE CLUB INFORMATION

THE MID-CITIES COMMODORE CLUB is a non-profit organization devoted to the collection and dissemination of computer knowledge, to the encouragement of computer education and to the use of Commodore computers in the home, at school, and in business. The appropriate and legal use of all types of software is encouraged by this club.

The MCCC is not connected with Commodore Business Machines, Ltd. or Commodore, Inc. Commodore and Commodore product names (PET, CBM, VIC, C64, C128, and AMIGA) are registered trademarks of Commodore, Inc.

Our meetings are open to all. Membership dues are \$20.00 a year and entitle the member to a monthly mailed copy of the MCCC NEWS, the club newsletter, library copying privileges, attendance at any or all chapter and club meetings as well as participation in the club-sponsored classes. An additional \$12.00 authorizes club members access to the MCCC ASCII and Graphics Bulletin Boards. Dues are payable for one year in advance.

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Non-members will pay commercial rates.

The deadline for submissions to the MCCC NEWS is the third Saturday of each month. PAYMENT MUST ACCOMPANY CAMERA-READY AD COPY. Make all checks payable to Mid-Cities Commodore Club and mail to MCCC NEWS, P. O. Box 1578, Bedford, TX 76095.

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